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PALESTINE REFUGEE PROBLEM:

Memorandum submitted to the Conciliation Commission by the Government of Israel, 17 March 1949

This paper examines the origins of the refugee problem and disclaims Israeli responsibility for its creation. It estimates the total number of refugees at 530,000, and states that the main solution is that of resettlement, since the basis of the refugees' economic life in Israel has been destroyed and their repatriation is politically undesirable. It concludes that the absorptive capacity of Iraq, Syria and Transjordan is sufficient to permit resettlement of some 300,000 rural refugees, with limited numbers going to Lebanon and North Africa, and suggests that the 175,000 urban refugees be distributed in Iraq, Lebanon, Syria, and Transjordan. The recommended program assumes the cooperation of the governments concerned, as well as financial and technical aid from international sources.

This paper presents the attitude of the Israeli Government towards this problem, and is not intended to represent the policy of the Department of State.

RESTRICTED

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY [illegible] DATE Jan 4 1988
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